DATE: April 6, 2007

TO: School District Superintendents and Public School Academy Administrators

FROM: Margaret M. Ropp, Ph.D., director, Center for Educational Performance and Information

Jeremy M. Hughes, Ph.D., deputy superintendent/chief academic officer, Michigan Department of Education

SUBJECT: Graduation and Dropout Rates for School Year 2005-2006

It is that time again, when we calculate the graduation and dropout rates. The Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI) will calculate the 2005-2006 school year rates utilizing the districts' official Single Record Student Database (SRSD) submissions. In late spring, the Web-based Graduation and Dropout Review and Comment Application (GAD) will open for districts and schools/facilities to review their calculated rates and make minimal adjustments based on their most recent knowledge of students' movements.

Michigan is transitioning from using aggregated data for determining the graduation and dropout rates to determining the rates based upon a student cohort that is followed for four years, as the National Governors Association's methodology prescribes. Until the transition is completed, the formula for determining the 2005-2006 rates will be the same as that used for determining the 2004-2005 rates; however, this year dropout students will be identified by grade, gender, and race/ethnicity.

During our initial release of the GAD last year, we received several requests for individual student-level details. Therefore, we have modified the 2005-2006 application to provide that information.

To prepare for the opening of the GAD, we suggest the following actions:

1) **Review schools/facilities that will receive rates:** The schools/facilities that will be included in the district rate and those that will receive graduation and dropout rates can be viewed at the following unpublished link on the CEPI Web site: https://cepi.state.mi.us/srsd/cepi_reports/GraduationDropoutMain.asp.

2) **Review documentation:** It is very important for you and your staff to obtain and become familiar with the information related to the graduation and dropout rates. The documentation is located on the CEPI Web site. From the CEPI home page, at www.michigan.gov/cepi, click on "Graduation and Dropout Rates Information" on the right-hand Quick Links navigation bar.

3) **Review your district's authorized user(s):** It is important to ensure that you have appointed an individual who is responsible to access the application. In order to access the Graduation and Dropout Review and Comment Application, a security agreement must be completed and faxed to the CEPI Client Service Center. A copy of the security agreement is available on the CEPI Web site, as referenced in Item 2 above.

In the next few weeks, you will receive a follow-up e-mail message that will provide more detailed information concerning the submission period and access to the GAD. Please watch for this important communication item.

As always, thank you for your continued collaboration with CEPI and MDE.

cc: ISD superintendents
    PSA authorizers